1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

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I

The People of Greece

The Legend

When God was building the earth, he lavished all goods such as water, pasture, forests, and rich soil on the countries of the world. Then suddenly he remembered that he had forgotten Greece. What could he give to this country since he had given all the riches to the others? He started stroking his beard thoughtfully. All at once an idea struck him when he saw the rainbow hanging over his head. Reaching up, he chopped a piece off, stooped and picked up a little soil and many stones, and kneaded the whole thing together in the palm of his hand. Then, opening his palm, he blew the mixture into the sea, and Greece came into being.[1]

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In its symbolic meaning, the rainbow of the legend is the Greek people who are as colorful as the sun-drenched rocks on which their nation grew to greatness.

The fact that the Athenian civilization with its poets, philosophers, dramatists, and sculptors had its origin in a city of less than two hundred thousand people on the rocky Attic plain has been a source of wonder to all who know anything of ancient Greece. But today there is also a miracle of Greece at which to wonder. In our twentieth century we see a land of 51,182 square miles supporting eight million people; that is, an area the

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size of Alabama supports more than twice that state's population. But Greece has considerably less economic wealth. For instance, only about 25 percent of the land is arable. We see a people which in a fifty-year period has been able to survive five wars, including an exhausting civil war, at least two catastrophic population displacements, several violent earthquakes, and chronic droughts. Although it is a long span between Periclean Athens and the Greece which is the keystone of the Eastern Mediterranean NATO group, the Greeks, despite their repeated crises, seem to have gained in the strength to keep alive their vital spirit.

Every Greek stands out so distinctly as an individual that he defies easy location along the social spectrum. Is it the fierceness of the struggle to survive that has produced the sharply outlined individualism of the Greeks? Despite these marked individual differences, the Greeks can be sorted into three general groupings: the city Greeks, the seafaring Greeks, and the rural Greeks.[2] Each group, though sharing much in common, has a somewhat different orientation in its style of life. Each still depends upon the other two for the realization of its national destiny, and each adds its own color to the rainbow quality of contemporary Greek society.

The largest group, and the one least known, is that of the rural Greeks, the chief subject of this book. But this group cannot be understood out of its social context or without sketching in the outlines of the other two groups — the Greeks who live in cities and the Greeks who live by and on the sea.

The City Greek

Greek history shows that the Greek has traditionally been a child of the city. In antiquity he developed the city-state and he colonized through cities, not through the homestead on some developing frontier. Today, two thousand years later, Greek peasants coming to America directly from a village take up a trade in a city with much greater alacrity than they take up farming.[3] Behind this feeling at home in the city, which seems to exist in most Greeks (but most strongly, of course, in the settled urban classes), there is a fact of historic importance: the Greeks learned early that the city had a social organization all its own and that from the city radiated lines of economic, political, and religious authority. They knew that those who understood the city could manipulate these lines.[4] Thus armed, they were able to keep in advance of their neighbors to such an extent that, when the seminomadic Turks captured the Greek capital (Constantinople) in 1453, the conquered Greeks quickly moved into places of prominence and power in the conqueror's regime. Consequently, the Greeks through the years have become increasingly experienced in the arts of social administration and economic dealing in an urban setting. Every event or possible event had its "angle" to be weighed judiciously and then energetically exploited.

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423 474 241 the smallest holdings, must have found sweet consolation in knowing that now many of their more advantaged village neighbors wish to join the cooperative pool. But this poses a problem. "How," the secretary asked anxiously, "can we calculate what arrangement to make with these people? How can we know what to charge them for the risk we took, the major expenses we bore? Certainly, now that we have succeeded, it would not be fair for them to come in and benefit free of cost from the pioneering work that we have done."

As these cooperative members talked of their plans, their eyes glowed with happiness and enthusiasm. The men had concrete proposals to solve other problems. They expect to shift from sole concentration upon grain production to more diversified farming, including livestock and poultry production, the raising of dry legumes and other crops that tend to give employment to the able-bodied members of the cooperating families.

International recognition as well as scientific farming is coming to Nees Karyes. Today there are people from Yugoslavia and Israel, as well as touring Americans, who have seen the way some of the peasant families in this village of Thessaly set about solving their problem of too little land in too many strips cultivated in unscientific ways. The secret of this undertaking, in great part at least, lies in the feeling of responsibility on the part of those who participate, since they originated and now conduct and plan for the cooperative which they jointly own.

Pressure on the Land

161 241 511 Most rural Greeks, however, struggle along with insufficient resources and with no cooperative venture such as Nees Karyes to give them hope. A village cobbler from Karpenesi in Central Greece explained the matter in this way: "There has been such an increase in population that the fields are no longer sufficient. The village child today lives more poorly than did his father as a child, because there are more mouths to feed and no added resources."

A well-informed Greek official put the problem in excellent perspective: "Today there is less income per family, less food, and the land values go up. Those that have more land become better off, leading to totally new economic and social distinctions in the villages. Many of our farmers are trying to make a living on such small farms that all they produce is hate. The main problem of the Greek farm family is the population problem. There are too many people. The villager with nothing to do has no place to go in search of work. That is why you see here in Athens many strong, healthy men selling matches. They have no work to do either in their villages or here in the city."

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What the Greek villagers are up against in one part of the Peloponnesos is revealed in *Greece, Ripe for Improvement:*

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Like many of the older agricultural areas of the world, this area is densely populated and now has far more people than its depleted resources can adequately support. . . . At the present time, nearly 10,000 people are attempting to support themselves on 25,000 hectares (62,500 acres) of land, some of it waterlogged, most of it eroded, and all of it reduced in productivity.[16]

Yet this population pressure is of relatively recent occurrence. One writer in 1842 described the large amount of land then available in the Greece which at that time consisted of the Peloponnesos and Central Greece:

> The industry of the 100,000 persons engaged in agriculture is almost completely lost to view in the extensive wilds of Greece; and the universal remark of tourists is, "What a pity that the cultivation of the soil is so neglected! what a rich and fertile country! what myriads of colonists might prosper here!" [17]

What happened between 1842 and 1952 to change the population picture so drastically? The population of Greece grew not only by natural increase but by the acquisition of new territory. The story can be told most simply by figures contained in the United Nations' *Demographic Yearbook* for 1952; in 1861 there were 60 people per square mile in what was then Greece; in 1951 there were 149 people per square mile in what is Greece today.

Students of population remind us quite properly that mere density per square mile is not a safe guide to the actual or the potential standard of living. The highly industrialized areas of Western Europe support several times the density of Greece and their people have many more modern conveniences. In a rural country, the density in terms of arable land is a more revealing indication of living conditions.

In the United States there are 17 acres of arable land for each farm person, but in both Greece and India there are only 1.3 acres. Our major farm problems come from surpluses; Greece, too, has her surpluses, although, like most countries moving away from a peasant economy, she is deficient in certain food supplies. One ray of hope for the less-privileged countries is the possibility that they may increase production per acre from 13 to 14 bushels (the present grain yields in Greece) closer to 30 bushels, a figure surpassed by the United Kingdom, Denmark, and the Netherlands, where scientific agriculture is practiced. But even here basic soil types set certain limits.

The present situation seems likely to become even more acute. In Greece between 1951 and 1961 there was a population increase of 9 percent, a figure which may grow larger if death rates are lowered faster than birth rates. Without a rapidly expanding economy to absorb these added people into productive jobs, the Greeks will feel their economic limitations even

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more acutely and will find it harder to raise the level of living in many of the depressed areas of the country.

Land Use in Greece

What each peasant does with his own birthright of land adds up to the use Greece as a whole makes of her soil resources.[18] We may not be able to spot the patterns of ownership from observing the countryside, but we can see what is being grown and can check casual impressions against the official figures. Of 100 acres, 25 are used for agriculture, 15 are in forest, and the remaining 60 are in scrub, settlements, poor natural pasture, or just plain rock, gravel, or swamp. Roads, however, tend to take the observer through the areas where the land is cultivated and where many fields lie close together. In such areas, if we look only at the agricultural land, out of every 100 acres we would see 46 acres in grain, 5 in other food crops, 4 in industrial crops (cotton, tobacco, and so on), 25 in orchards and gardens, and 20 acres lying fallow. In the farm areas of the United States we would not find so high a proportion of fallow land, nor so much in orchards and gardens; instead, there would be more land in temporary meadows and in forage crops, because of our greater emphasis on livestock even though we have only about 27 acres out of each 100 in agricultural land, close to the Greek figure of 25. Our forest area takes up 32 acres (double that of Greece) and all other uses, 41 acres.

When we think of the land hunger of many Greeks, and the insufficient diet they get from their harvests, we wonder if there is any way to change these statistics. Is there more arable land available than 25 out of each 100 acres? Is there possibility of better use? Two studies, one Greek and one American, supply partial answers for those concerned about the peasant and his handful of earth.

Greece Today, a publication of the National Bank of Greece and Athens, in a 1954 article on Greek agriculture, points out that the available land is inadequately exploited owing to lack of funds. Only 7.8 percent of the agricultural land is irrigated; 11.5 percent is under mechanized cultivation; and chemical fertilizers, although used in twice the quantity of a few years ago, still cover not more than 25 percent of the cultivated land. Furthermore, when Greece is compared with 14 other European countries, the yield of Greek agriculture, expressed in gross income per unit of area, is 63 percent below, livestock production is 44 percent below, and the productivity of the labor of the Greek farmer is 48 percent below the respective average for these countries.

A study made by the American Mission for Aid to Greece indicates that much more efficient use could be made of the so-called idle lands, most of which are owned or administered by the state.[19] They were obtained in the population exchange of 1922–24, and from the Chams (*Tsamides* is

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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177 row alleys behind the handsome main streets of the city. Simi-
184 larly, in the countryside it is still possible to see groups of peas-
369 ants toiling stoopbacked and patient as they harvest their grain
[243] with sickles, handful by handful, while, perhaps in the next field, an American combine may be observed noisily at work.

The combines and the glistening apartment buildings of Athens are very new; the donkeys and the sickles are older than recorded history. In a very real sense, the central problem of contemporary Greek life is how to close this gap, and bring the old and the new into a smooth and mutually beneficial interrelationship. Much progress has been made in this direction during the past ten years, but stubborn difficulties remain. It will require at least another generation before these difficulties can be overcome, even if peace and prosperity prevail throughout the coming years.

433 Peace and prosperity have seldom visited the Greeks for long,
161 least of all during the twentieth century. Greece was almost
648 continuously at war from 1912 to 1923 and again from 1940 to 1949; and the intervals of peace between these times of crisis were seldom secure. The wealth of the country suffered very severely from both periods of war, but in spite of economic dislocation and widespread destruction of property, the population increased fairly rapidly, from just over 5 million in 1920 (when Greece first attained approximately her present boundaries) to just about 8 million in 1956. Part of this growth was due to natural increase, but about one and a quarter million new inhabitants came to the country between 1922 and 1927, as a result of forcible exchanges of population with Turkey and Bulgaria after the first world war.

563 The effect of these exchanges was to make almost all of the population Greek in speech and sentiment, although two significant minority groups remained: a Slavic "Macedonian" population in the northwest where the borders of Greece, Yugo-

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

than 400 stremmata of cultivated land. Presumably the owner had divided legal title among relatives or friends without surrendering real control of his land.)

The village is very small. In 1956 its population was only 130,[1] yet it occupies no less than 6,000 acres, excluding the absentee landowner's estate, which is counted as part of the lands of Lofiscos by official government reckoning. This amounts to more than 46 acres per capita; and even though more than half of the land remains rough pasture, subject to flooding for part of every year, such an abundance of land represents solid wealth by Greek peasant standards. And indeed, the village is wealthy. Farmers find little difficulty in accumulating gold sovereigns with which to dower their daughters, for wheat is always in demand and a government purchase scheme keeps the price stable and well above world market levels. In spite of the shabby appearance of their houses and the untidy appearance of their clothes, the families of Lofiscos are, by their own standards, very well off. Almost all of them probably have several hundred gold sovereigns hidden away, but this no stranger could ever expect to know.

The tribulations of the second world war, of the occupation and of the guerrilla war made almost no impression on Lofiscos. The young men served in the army, of course, and saw something of the outer world. But on their return they seemed to fit back smoothly into the familiar routine. As the guerrillas never

1. This and all subsequent figures for village populations are rough approximations. Village records do not include any sort of census figure. They are confined to registration of births, marriages and deaths, and the most important function they serve is to provide the basis for the annual call-up of military recruits. Moreover, a family often remains registered in a village long after it has moved away; in such instances births and deaths are likely to be omitted from the village books, and may or may not be recorded elsewhere. One must therefore depend upon informal estimates of village officials. This leaves a considerable margin for error, unless the officials consulted are unusually careful.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Kotta

[Hill Villages]

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722 who stayed home. When the Greek army interrupted communi-
511 cation with the outside world this vital supply of cash was cut
[669] off. In 1947, therefore, the villagers were trying to spread out
[457] four months' food over the twelve months of the year.

Their diet was cornbread and little else. Nearly all of their
[262] sheep, whose milk had once helped to correct the deficiencies of
[164] a maize diet, had been slaughtered during the occupation; and
the prevalence of skin diseases and a certain lassitude in their
movements clearly indicated that malnutrition was added to
[263] undernourishment. They missed salt more acutely than any-
thing else. There had been none in the village for several weeks
when I was there.

669 Kotta remained in guerrilla hands until August 1949. It was
722 luckier than some of its neighboring communities inasmuch as
621 there was no fighting in the immediate environs, so that the
161 houses of the village escaped without more than casual damage.
But the villagers could not escape from famine, nor from dis-
ease that naturally followed in the wake of prolonged and dras-
[162] tic undernourishment. When I returned in 1956, the population
of the village had shrunk to 188, less than one third of what it
had been in 1947. The average number of persons per family
had declined to 2.4, whereas in 1947 families with fewer than
three children were a rarity and five or six children per family
was closer to the average.

About one hundred of the former inhabitants of the village
were simply missing. They had gone off, in desperation, looking
for food or safety and had not come back. Most, presumably,
had died or been killed. In addition, the village priest said that
about fifty of the village men were known to have been killed
while serving with the guerrillas; and five families had moved
west across the Albanian frontier in 1949 when the guerrilla re-
669 treat took place. But the largest single factor in the decline of
728 population was the removal of the village children by the guer-
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rillas. A total of 225 children, between the ages of two and twelve, had been taken north in the early stages of the war, and only three had returned. A few letters had come from some of them, originating in places as remote as Turkestan, Poland and Czechoslovakia; but most had not been heard from, and no one in the village knew whether they were alive or dead.

The evacuation of the village children may well have been conceived by the guerrilla authorities as a humanitarian measure. Considering the state of the village as I saw it in 1947, such an interpretation seems quite plausible. This was not the way the bereft parents viewed the matter, however. They gave no very coherent explanation of why the children were taken, but the abduction was remembered in 1956 as the greatest crime the guerrillas committed. Not a few parents have been left childless, and this, by traditional village standards, is a bitter disaster. Who will look after them in their old age?

Still another factor in the drastic depopulation of Kotta has been emigration. As soon as communications with the outside world became possible again, relatives rallied round in Toronto and Sydney, and helped a total of fifty-six persons to emigrate. The process is still going on. When I visited the village in 1956, a young man and his mother were on the verge of departure for Australia, where they would join cousins who were financing the voyage.

Yet in spite of the sorrows which have visited every family in the village, and in spite of the terrible suffering all have been through, the spirit of the village in 1956 seemed amazingly relaxed and calm – almost happy. The survivors gave the impression of being profoundly surprised to find themselves still alive. But what is more important, everyone now has enough to eat. The village land can feed the population; there is now no need to look for work outside; and remittances from abroad permit some families to indulge in small luxuries – kerosene lamps, for example.

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villagers know that they are now much better off than the people in Yugoslav Macedonia, with whom they so recently felt a degree of kinship.

Since 1954 no representative of the Greek government has lived in the village. An army detachment, which had been there from 1949, departed in 1954, leaving patriotic slogans on the walls of the buildings used as barracks. No gendarmes came to replace the soldiers. Hence the village has been left very largely to its own devices. The inhabitants like it that way. As is true of all villages in Greece, the government no longer tries to collect direct taxes from Kotta (as it did before the war), but contents itself with a 2 per cent sales tax on products sold in town markets. This, for Kotta, amounts to paying almost no taxes at all, for the inhabitants sell almost nothing. This, too, pleases the villagers.

Kotta, therefore, is a community in which thoroughly old-fashioned attitudes prevail. In spite of the harrowing guerrilla war – or rather because of it – life has resumed its old, familiar channels; and since everyone now has enough to eat without having to venture into the outside world, the villagers seem well content to settle down within their nearly self-sufficient valley and let the world go by.

The real question for the future is whether or not the village will proceed once again to breed children on the reckless scale that prevailed before. The age structure of the surviving population is altogether anomalous, the removal of all children between the ages of two and fourteen in 1948 having left a great gap. Moreover, military losses and emigration overseas mainly affected young men and women of the next older age groups. The potentially childbearing population has therefore been drastically depleted, so much so that out of a total of seventy-seven families in 1956, the village contained only four or five couples of childbearing age. (One must bear in mind that in a

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community where very early marriages have been the rule, a woman of thirty or thirty-five is already old.) Between 1952 and 1958 there were only four marriages in the village, twelve births, sixteen deaths. Under the circumstances, it seems certain that the population will decrease still further in the immediate future.

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Yet even four or five families could turn out to be quite enough to repopulate the village, if the old patterns of early marriage and numerous children prevail. Indeed, the close blood relationships of all the villagers suggests that in times past the community may well have contained only a handful of families from whom hundreds (or, counting those overseas, thousands) in due course descended. Thanks to the depopulation brought by the guerrilla war, the traditional life of Kotta has become easy once again, and if the young people accept the old ways, and do not allow the glitter of urban life overseas, reflected in the letters and money orders sent back by friends and relatives, to change their outlook, then it seems fairly certain that within a decade or less the depopulation of the village will come to a halt, and rapid growth in numbers will begin once more. If so, after something like thirty or forty years Kotta will probably be back in the impossible position of 1947.

This cycle is, I believe, the key to much Balkan history. The peasant family system was adjusted, from age-old antiquity, to supply large numbers of children, most of whom died from violence or disease before attaining adulthood. With the more or less effective pacification of the countryside in the last couple of centuries, together with the elimination of some epidemic diseases and the control of others, this age-old balance was thrown out of kilter, so that the peasant population began (as early as the mid-eighteenth century) to run far ahead of the development of resources that might sustain it.

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175 669 619 In politics, the result was a series of risings against the lords of the plains, which centered in the marginal hill villages. Until 1912, the lords of the Macedonian plains were of course Turks, and Greek nationalism (like other Balkan nationalisms) was therefore able with perfect propriety to combine territorial expansion with social revolution, and pit hill against plain in the name of individual freedom and national self-determination. The first clear example of this phenomenon was the Greek War of Independence of 1821–30. The long series of revolts and irregular wars of the nineteenth century in the European dominions of the Ottoman Empire continued the process; and the guerrilla movements in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece during (and in Greece after) the second world war were only its latest manifestations. In this most recent period, however, the lords of the plains were not Turks any longer, and were not even landlords. Instead they were fellow peasants and co-nationals. The difference was cloaked during World War II by the fact that Germans and Italians were in the plains, and to attack them served to justify the far more genuine assault upon the plains villages – from which, after all, the major food supply of the guerrilla forces had to come. Only in Greece, between 1946 and 1949, did the divergence between nationalism and social revolution become clear; and even in that instance, as pointed out above, most guerrillas felt themselves to be Greek patriots as well.

621 161 433 Kotta's wartime experience shows dramatically how such warfare brought its own solution to the problem of overpopulation – cruel, blind, bloody, but effective. Depopulation, such as Kotta suffered, certainly sufficed to solve for a generation or so the problem of too many mouths and not enough land. When the crisis passed, survivors could settle back to a more or less satisfactory life again, until their growing numbers should once more make the traditional style of life impossible within the

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limits of the hill valleys. In times past, Balkan hillsmen then had to seek sustenance from the plains, either by peaceful labor or by armed forays.

As far as Kotta and villages like it are concerned, it now seems to me an open question whether the old cycle will repeat itself again or whether new standards of expectation and conduct will make sufficient inroads upon the traditional peasant family system to check early marriage and rapid multiplication of numbers. Through overseas emigration, the modern city has made its mark on Kotta. All but a few young people want to leave, and many have done so. At the same time, the handful who remain appear to be conforming to the old ways. Perhaps the critical turn will come as their children grow up; for if the rising generation elects to look beyond the confines of the village – and if the possibilities of migration, either within Greece or overseas, exist – then, perhaps, as the population of the village begins to press once again upon the limits of local production, the young people may decline to continue the old, economically suicidal pattern, and will instead seek their fortunes far afield, and refuse to marry into hopeless poverty at home. It depends more than anything else, perhaps, upon the degree of communication that may come to exist between the outside world and the villagers. In 1956 these contacts were limited. Newspapers came seldom; vehicles rarely. But the village did possess a radio that brought daily news from Athens; and emigrants' letters were perhaps the most important of all the channels of contact with the great world beyond the valley in which Kotta nestles.

Survivors of the older generation – those who have lost their children to the guerrillas – seem to have no doubts or reservations in wishing to see more and more children about again. The priest complained of how empty and joyless the village was without the throngs of children he knew before. He deeply

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regretted the loss of five of his own whom the guerrillas had taken. Yet he was fortunate in having one child still with him, a girl who was too young to leave her mother when the guerrillas took the older children. As for the attitudes of the younger generation in the village, I could not satisfy myself. In the presence of their elders, they generally kept quiet, and certainly refrained from any overt dissent. Whether they, too, shared the traditional view that the more children one has the better off one is (assured thereby of God's blessing and of sustenance in old age), I could not tell.

CHERASIA

Cherasia is a village in Thessaly near the base of Mount Pelion, some six air miles from Volos, the fourth city of Greece. Along the winding road, however, it lies about twelve miles from Volos; and before 1952 the only road connection with the village required a detour of about twenty-four miles around the mountain. The community is an old one. Local tradition holds that it was founded 680 years ago. Until the Germans destroyed the "upper" village in 1943, the community led a semi-migratory life, spending the summer months high up the mountain where a natural spring supplied water, and coming down to the foot of the mountain only in winter, when the flocks could pasture on the stubble of other villages' grain fields. The villagers looked upon the upper village as their real home, the lower one as only a temporary shelter.

The traditional occupations of the village were sheepherding and charcoal burning. Once upon a time, sixty or seventy years ago, the main support of the community may well have been sheep, pastured on the rough mountain in summer, and on grain stubble in the winter. Then, by degrees, charcoal burning and woodcutting became more important. Two factors presumably

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Kardamili

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animals; and before roads were built, these villages brought their surplus on donkey-back (or on the hoof) to Kardamili, where it was put on board a small ship, and carried either to Athens or to Kalamata, the local metropolis, some thirty-five miles away on the rich Messenian plain. In addition, an oil-pressing plant was constructed in 1929 in Kardamili which employed as many as a hundred persons at the height of the season. Even when there were no olives to press, the plant kept open the year around by making soap and other products.

This was the basis upon which about 750 people were able to make a living in the village before the war. In recent years, however, the village has not prospered. The oil factory closed down permanently in 1940, depriving the village of what had been one of its most important resources. After the war, a new road, built in 1949–50, destroyed the importance of the port. Instead of bringing their olives to Kardamili on donkey-back and selling them there, the peasants of the hinterland loaded their produce directly onto trucks bound for Kalamata or Athens.

The new system was an obvious improvement on older methods of transport and marketing; but it meant that Kardamili, which for a few years between the wars had struggled toward becoming a miniature town, was compelled to sink back to a purely village status. One manifestation of this change is a decrease in population. In 1940, the village had about 750 inhabitants; in 1956 the population totaled only 512. War losses were insignificant, although guerrillas did kill two persons from the village. The whole community was forcibly evacuated to Kalamata in 1949 to prevent its exploitation by guerrilla bands that ranged even this far south. The evacuation was perhaps scarcely justified, however, since the guerrillas never again came near, and when the villagers returned in 1950 they found their houses intact.

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They came back to a village whose earlier means of livelihood was being undermined by new roads. As this fact became clear, emigration from the village commenced. Altogether, something like two hundred persons left the village between 1950 and 1956. Only one family went overseas, to Australia. The rest went either to Kalamata or to Athens. Among those who have remained in the village, a considerable number have undertaken seasonal migration to the Messenian plain in order to seek work with which to supplement the meager income from their olive trees in the village. The biggest single source of employment which has opened up in recent years is work in rice fields, developed in former salt marshes on the very edge of the Messenian plain. For the villagers of Kardamili these fields in Messenia have meant work and wages. Between eighty and ninety persons, both men and women, leave the village each year to help cultivate the rice fields. While working, they live in shanties or even out of doors, and return to their homes in Kardamili when work stops, or when something needs to be done on their own land.

Within the village there are variations in wealth, but no family has so much land as to need to hire labor. Indeed, the village secretary told me that the richest man in the village has only forty days' work a year on his olive trees, while nearly one third of all the village families own no land at all.

The only change that has come to the traditional agriculture of the community is the introduction of fertilizer, but few families use it. A common opinion holds that fertilizer is bad for the olive trees, and makes them short-lived by forcing an unnatural proliferation of fruit. A more sophisticated farmer told me that while the size of the fruit is increased by fertilizer, the quantity of oil is not increased in anything like the same proportion and its quality is lowered. Since the olive trees of this part of Greece are famous for the high quality of the oil they produce, which

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were enrolled in the village primary school because boys from neighboring villages were in attendance. Within Kardamili, I was told, almost every boy goes through the first two years of gymnasium. Even without the final two years in Kalamata there is a chance, though not a good one, of finding a clerical job somewhere outside.

The other aspect of the adjustment characteristic of Nea Eleftherohori – postponement of marriage through the dowry system – is less advanced in Kardamili, but seems to be coming in. Dowries are rising, I was told, and even a man who owns no land himself may now ask a wife to bring him 2,000 okes of olive oil – the equivalent of several hundred dollars. This is a far cry from the huge sums expected in Nea Eleftherohori by a young man who is to inherit land; but what is significant is that before the war such demands were not being made in Kardamili. In those days a landless man would expect no more than a nominal dowry.

Village statistics did not show very convincingly any decrease in the birth rate, however. The decrease in numbers born no more than corresponded to the decline in the village population. Moreover, the decrease in deaths was more rapid than any change in the number of births – owing, mainly, to the elimination of malaria – so that the rate of natural increase of the population had actually risen between 1947 and 1956. So far, it would appear, the villagers have not felt it necessary to change their family customs very profoundly. Migration, facilitated by education, has sufficed to relieve intolerable conditions. The more drastic step of postponing marriage has not become generally necessary.

In poor villages deeper into Mani, these processes have gone much further. In one that I visited only briefly, Yerolimini, I was told that "no" young men are left in the village: all have gone to seek their fortunes in Piraeus, where this village has

The Greeks have a story that when God made the world he put the earth through a sieve and used the soil to make the different countries; but the stones that were left in the sieve he threw over his shoulder, and they became Greece.[1] The land is so mountainous, precipitous and stony that out of the 50,100 square miles that constitute the area of Greece, only 25 per cent are usable as fields, orchards and pastures.[2] Yet on this land, out of a population of 7,335,675, according to 1940 figures, 60 per cent are directly engaged in agriculture, and another 15 per cent cater to the needs of the farmers.[3] This condition, as well as a growing population, is basic to the need for technical change in Greece. Through more than 2,500 years, Greece solved the problem of increasing population on limited land by sending out her people as colonists or immigrants. In the first two decades of this century, emigration to the United States provided the main solution. Early in the 1920s' two things took place which combined to make the population problem acute; the United States passed a law under which a quota was applied to immigrants, which limited drastically the number of Greeks who could thereafter enter the country; and the exchange of populations with Turkey, which increased the population of Greece suddenly by more than a fourth. Since then, the population figures from 1928 to 1940 indicate an annual increase of 1.5 per cent.[4] The traditional ways of farming and the traditional crops cannot support this growing population, even in terms of sheer subsistence. Change must be introduced at the very roots of the economy, striking at the relationship of man to the land and of man to his work, which is a close and meaningful one to the Greeks. How to do this without destroying the meaning of life is the question facing those entrusted with the introduction of change into this culture.

We give here a report of the basic structure, tenets, and attitudes of Greek culture which should be considered in applying change.

Greece has been undergoing induced change for several decades now. Before 1920, the centralization of political and civil affairs effected profound and permeating change in village communities which had been used to self-regulation, and where a prominent farmer spent his entire fortune to build a village school, or a schoolteacher, on hearing of the appearance of the enemy in the vicinity, could, on his own initiative, pass out arms and lead his pupils to battle. After the exchange of populations with Turkey in 1922, the Near East Foundation, helping to rehabilitate the refugees, also undertook to introduce changes in sanitation, child care and the standard of living generally. Changes in the areas of agriculture and health were

[1] A. W. Gomme, 1945, p. 11.
[2] *Report of the FAO Mission for Greece*, 1947, p. 85. (*See* United Nations, FAO).
[3] Ibid. p. 134.
[4] Ibid. p. 162.